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AUTHOR Herman, Michael L.
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ABSTRACT

Interlibrary loan requests originating at 72 Idaho public libraries during a 12-day period in January 1978, were analyzed to determine fill rate, turnaround time, and patron satisfaction with turnaround time and materials supplied. The results show that of 910 total requests submitted 75.05 percent were filled, 20.11 percent had not been received by the end of the study period, and 4.84 percent were not filled. These figures are compared to those from previous studies. While the mean turnaround time for requests filled was 11.39 days, a total of 94.71 percent of the respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with a turnaround time of one to 39 days, and 94.07 percent were very satisfied or satisfied with the materials they received. Data tables in the report and in appendices provide a more specific breakdown of the findings. The appendices also present a sample data collection worksheet, cover letter, instruction sheet, and second cover letter, as well as a list of patron comments reproduced verbatim from the survey sheets and arranged by degree of satisfaction. (JD)

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IDAHO INTERLIBRARY LOAN:

A STUDY OF FILL RATE, TURNAROUND TIME, PATRON SATISFACTION, AND CHARACTERISTICS OF REQUESTS

A RESEARCH PAPER

PRESENTED TO

THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF LIBRARIANSHIP

UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT

OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

MASTER OF ARTS

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

BY

MICHAEL L. HERMAN

JUNE 1978

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INTRODUCTION

In a rural state such as Idaho, many individual library collections are not large enough to satisfy all the reading and information requirements of the patrons who use them. Submission of an interlibrary loan request gives the library patrons of the state access to larger and more varied collections of materials.

Idaho interlibrary loan requests fall into one of three categories: (a) title requests, for a specific book, recording, or film; (b) subject requests, for materials on a subject for which the resources of the requesting library have already been searched and exhausted; and (c) periodical requests, for photocopy of a specific periodical article. The requests generally pass from originating library to one of six Regional Back Up Centers (REBUC) and are searched there. If the requested materials are not at the REBUC, the request is usually passed on to the Idaho State Library (ISL) in Boise. If materials are not yet located, the item may be ordered by ISL and reserved for the requesting library, or the request may be returned to the appropriate REBUC library with a suggestion that the item be ordered and reserved there. If materials are not purchased, a request which is still unfilled may be referred to another Idaho library, forwarded for search at the Pacific Northwest Bibliographic Center (PNBC) in Seattle, or sent to a library out of the area.

This study examined interlibrary loan requests submitted by Idaho public library patrons during a 12-day period in January 1978. It sought to determine the percentages of submitted requests that were filled, to

examine the percentages of each category of request that were filled, and to identify the referral library that filled the request.

The study analyzed the length of time that elapsed between the submission of an interlibrary loan request and receipt of requested materials by the originating library. Patron attitudes toward delays between submission of requests and receipt of request materials were analyzed to determine the degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the amount of time elapsed. Patron attitudes toward the materials they received were examined to determine the degree to which they were satisfied with what was sent.

The study examined the amount of time that elapsed before patrons claimed materials and determined what percentage of materials were not picked up after being received at the requesting library. The characteristics of filled and unfilled requests were examined, including their dates of publication and the subject classes into which they were distributed. Finally, the study recorded the comments made by patrons who requested and received materials through interlibrary loan.

TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Fill Rate - The percentage of requests in any category for which materials were provided.

Filled - Requests for which materials were sent to the originating library.

ILL - Interlibrary loan.

ISL - Idaho State Library: usually the second referral point for most interlibrary loan requests.

Not Filled - Requests which were not filled and for which no further action was forthcoming.

Not Received - Requests for which the requesting library had received neither materials nor notification of failure to fill by the end of the study period.

Other - Any library outside Idaho with the exception of those in the PNBC system.

Other Idaho - Any Idaho library - public, academic, or special - to which an interlibrary loan request is sent outside the usual REBUC to ISL progression. A request from Region 1 that was filled at the REBUC for Region 3 would be classed as having been filled at an Other Idaho library.

PNBC - Pacific Northwest Bibliographic Center. A cooperative regional interlibrary loan center for libraries in the Pacific Northwest.

Periodical Requests - A request for photocopy of a specific periodical article.

REBUC - Regional Back Up Center: usually the first referral point for most interlibrary loan requests. There are 6 REBUC libraries in Idaho, one for each region.

Referral Point - Any library to which an interlibrary loan request is sent in search of materials.

Subject Request - A request for any relevant information on a specific subject.

Title Request - A request by title for a specific book, record, or film.

Turnaround Time - The number of days elapsed between submission of an interlibrary loan request and receipt of requested materials.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In the past ten years, interlibrary loan has been the subject of several studies, some of which contain elements which are relevant to the present investigation.

Fill Rate

In 1968, Nelson Associates' evaluation of the New York State Library's interlibrary loan pilot program studied a sample of the 43,233 requests received in an eight-month period and revealed that 54.70% of all requests were filled (4, p. 24). A follow-up investigation of the same system by the New York Department of Education in 1969 showed an improvement to a fill rate of 68.12% (3, p. 11) for all requests. A two-part study of interlibrary loan practices in the Pacific Northwest by Lura G. Currier in 1969 arrived at a fill rate of 85.96% (1, p. 66) for the 3,290 requests analyzed at the Pacific Northwest Bibliographic Center (PNBC). A separate section of the same report revealed a fill rate at Washington State Library of 75.53% (1, p. 164) for the 5,890 requests analyzed there. A survey of academic interlibrary loans by Sara K. Thompson, published in 1970, reported a fill rate of 63.70% for a sample of 5,895 requests (9, pp. 38, 64). Here, when requests for serials were omitted, the fill rate rose to 70.05%. David W. Taylor and others, in an investigation at PNBC in 1971, reported a fill rate of 83.69% (8, p. 26) for all requests forwarded, a slight drop from the findings of Currier in 1969. Vernon E. Palmour's study of academic libraries, published in 1972, noted that 71.00% of all requests were filled (6, p. 4), while his study of Illinois resource libraries, conducted with

Lucy E. Gray in 1971, (5, p.1) reported a fill rate of 34.00% there. Stevens and Smith's 1975 analysis of interlibrary loan in Tennessee reported a fill rate of 85.00% (7, p. 178) for academic and public libraries combined. While the above cited investigations do not provide a conclusive standard nationwide, they can be used as a basis for comparing the results of the present study.

Turnaround Time

The Nelson Associates study in New York resulted in a mean turnaround time of 22.14 days (4, p. 56) for all requests. Taylor's evaluation of PNBC reported a mean turnaround time of 19.75 days (8, p. 66) for the sample of requests surveyed there. Palmour's study of interlibrary loan in academic libraries did not calculate a mean turnaround time, but did note that 50.00% of all materials requested were received within 10 days (6, p. 47) and 66.00% of all materials requested were received within 15 days. Each of these studies provides a basis for comparing the turnaround times arrived at in the present inquiry.

Patron Satisfaction

Only the Nelson Associates study discussed patron satisfaction with interlibrary loan service. In an open-ended section of that survey, patrons were asked to provide suggestions for improvement (4, p. 85). Of the 2,754 patrons who responded, 40.10% indicated that service was excellent as it was. A need for faster service was indicated by 8.90% of the respondents. The remainder of the responses were of a general nature and did not contain suggestions for improvement of service. While not specifically

related to the research presented herein, these results do provide some basis for an oblique comparison.

Characteristics of Requests

Classes of requests. The Nelson Associates study included a system of 12 classes, similar to the 10 found in Dewey. Their classification system showed that materials in the social sciences, history, and science/mathematics were the most frequently requested. Currier's 1969 analysis of PNBC used the standard Dewey system to classify requests processed at the Washington State Library and found that classes 600-699 (Technology), 300-399 (Social Sciences), and 100-199 (Philosophy and Related Disciplines) were the most heavily requested. Palmour and Gray's study of Illinois resource libraries indicated that the social sciences and technology were first and second, respectively, in request demand. Each of the examples above can be compared with the classes of requests reported in the present survey.

Publication dates. Several of the studies analyzed requests by item publication date and can be compared with the current investigation. Currier's 1969 inquiry at PNBC found that 51.13% of the requested items had been published within the previous 13 years (1, p. 60). The section of her study that analyzed requests at Washington State Library found that 57.15% of items requested there had been published within the past 13 years (1, p. 158). Palmour and Gray's 1971 analysis of requests at Illinois resource libraries revealed that 58.93% of requests were f items published within the previous 12 years (5, p. 20), while Stevens and Smith's 1975 survey in Tennessee noted that 60.10% of materials requested were for items published within the previous nine years.

Requests Not Filled

Currier's analysis of unfilled requests at PNBC (1, pp. 67, 68) found that a relatively high percentage of non-fills were distributed in the areas of religion, philosophy, and genealogy. The most prevalent reasons for non-fills were that requested materials were too new to have been purchased, materials were of an inexpensive (paperback) nature and should have been purchased by the requesting library, and materials were non-circulating. A 1970 study of unfilled requests in New York by Richard Ellis and others (2, p. 31) found that the primary reasons for failure to fill were that items were not owned, items were not verifiable, and items did not circulate. Palmour and Gray's investigation noted that non-ownership of requested items was a primary cause of failure to fill, with non-circulating materials also resulting in some unfilled requests (5, p. 23). Palmour's analysis of unfilled requests in academic libraries also cited non-ownership and non-circulation as principle reasons for failure to fill (6, p 46). Stevens and Smith's examination of interlibrary loan in Tennessee found that the highest percentage of unfilled requests resulted from non-ownership of the requested item (7, p. 179). The reasons for non-fills in the foregoing studies can be compared with reasons for non-fills in the present inquiry.

This search of the literature resulted in the discovery of enough studies to allow comparisons of fill rates, turnaround time, characteristics of requests, subject classification and publication dates, and factors in failure to fill with those same elements of this study. The single example of inquiry into patron satisfaction indicates a need for further study in that area.

METHODOLOGY

A data-collection instrument (Appendix I, Exhibit A) was designed to gather information on the library and region that originated each interlibrary loan request, the type of request form used, the referral point from which materials were received, and the amount of turnaround time between submission of request and receipt of materials. Included in the worksheet, as well, was a section to record the date the patron called for the materials. Also included was a section for the patron to register degree of satisfaction with the length of time between submission of request and receipt of materials, and a section for the patron to register degree of satisfaction with materials received. A separate open-ended section provided space for any comments the patron felt were appropriate.

In December 1977, a preliminary cover letter (Appendix I, Exhibit B), a sample of the data-collection instrument, and a sample instruction sheet (Appendix I, Exhibit C) were mailed to 115 Idaho public libraries to alert them to the forthcoming study and to solicit questions and suggestions.

In early January 1978, packets containing a second cover letter (Appendix I, Exhibit D) and a supply of data-collection instruments and instructions for completing them were mailed to the same libraries.

Participating libraries were to fill out the first section of one data-collection instrument for each interlibrary loan request they originated in a 12-day period from Monday, January 16, 1978 through Friday, January 27, 1978. They were to attach the data-collection instrument to their file copy of the request form and complete it as requested materials arrived. On Friday, February 24, the study period ended, and all

data-collection instruments and attached request forms were to be returned to the Idaho State Library.

A total of 72 Idaho public libraries participated in the study. These libraries provided 910 usable data-collection instruments which met the requirements set forth in the instructions. The data-collection instruments were analyzed to determine the fill rate for all requests submitted and the fill rate for each request type.* They were further analyzed to determine which referral points provided materials and the types of materials supplied by each referral point.

Turnaround time in days was analyzed for all filled requests. The range, mode, and median in days were extracted and mean turnaround time was calculated. Turnaround times for requests originating in the various regions were determined and compared, as were turnaround times for requests filled at the various referral points. Turnaround times were also analyzed for each of the request types.

Analysis of the section of the data-collection instrument which asked patrons to indicate their satisfaction with turnaround time was limited to determining the frequency of response occurrence in each of the degrees of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The section which asked patrons to indicate their satisfaction with materials received was also analyzed to determine the frequency of response occurrence in each of the degrees of satisfaction for all requests and for each request type.

*Reported percentages may equal slightly more or less than 100.00% as a result of rounding.

The section including data on the date the patron claimed materials was analyzed to determine the percentage of materials received at a requesting library that were actually picked up. The range, mode, and median in days were extracted and mean delay in days between receipt of materials and patron pick up was calculated.

Those data collection instruments with file copies of interlibrary loan requests attached were analyzed to determine the characteristics of the requests, including class and publication dates.

Patron comments were subdivided by general type and reported verbatim.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

A statewide total of 910 responses which fit into the study time period and which had at least one usable section were received. These requests were sorted into the following three major request outcomes: (a) Filled: requests for which materials were sent to the requesting library; (b) Not Received: requests which were still in process and for which, at some future point, either the requested materials would be provided or reasons for not filling the request would be communicated to the originating library; (c) Not Filled: requests which, for various reasons, were not filled and for which no further action was forthcoming. The requests were also subdivided by request type: (a) Title: requests for a specific book, record, or film title; (b) Subject: requests for information on a given subject: (c) Periodical: requests for photocopy of specific periodical article.

Fill Rate

Of the 910 total requests submitted, 75.05% (683) were filled, 20.11% (183) were not received, and 4.84% (44) were not filled. When the 910 requests were subdivided by request type, 75.16% (684) occurred as titles, 20.88% (190) were for materials on a specific subject, and 3.96% (36) asked for periodical photocopy. The 75.05% total fill rate can be compared with those of previous surveys as follows:

Study	System Type	Date	Fill Rate
Palmour & Gray * (5, p. 1)	Public/Academic	1971	34.00%
Nelson Associates (4, p. 24)	Public/Academic	1968	54.70%
Thomson (9, pp. 38, 64)	Academic	1970	63.70%
N.Y. State Educ. Dept. (3, p. 11)	Public/Academic	1969	68.12%
Palmour (6, p. 4)	Academic	1972	71.00%
Currier (1, p. 164)	Public/Academic	1969	75.53%
Taylor (8, p. 26)	Public/Academic	1971	83.69%
Stevens & Smith (7, p. 178)	Public/Academic	1975	85.00%
Currier (1, p. 164)	Public/Academic	1969	85.96%

*Complete bibliographic citations will be found in the References section.

Given a longer time period for material returns, the fill rate of the present investigation may eventually have been higher, since some of the requests which were in the not received category were actually in use at the referral library and had been placed on reserve for the requesting library or were still in the process of referral and search.

Of the 683 requests that were filled, 69.69% (476) were for titles, 26.21% (179) were for subjects, and 4.10% (28) were for periodicals. Of the 183 requests that were categorized as not received 93.99% (172) were for titles, 2.73% (5) were for subjects, and 3.28% (6) were for periodical photocopy. Of the 44 requests that were not filled, 81.82% (36) were for titles, 13.64% (6) were for subjects, and 4.55% (2) were for periodical photocopy. Table 1 illustrates the percentages of each request type that were distributed in each possible outcome category.

Title requests: fill rate. (See Table 1) That a relatively low 69.59% of all title requests submitted were filled, compared to the filled figures for subject and periodical requests, and a relatively high 25.15% were not received, was a reflection of the number of title requests that were for new or popular items that had not yet been purchased or that were in use at the referral point and were placed on reserve for the requesting library. Another reason for the lower filled figure for titles was that, because of their specific nature, some title requests could not be filled at the first referral point and had to be sent on, thereby decreasing the chance that they would be filled by the close of the study period. The 5.26% that were not filled were mostly for items which could not be located or verified or which both the Regional Back-up Center (REBUC) and Idaho State Library (ISL) declined to purchase. Some were for items which were not available in Idaho and which the patron was unwilling to have searched elsewhere for reasons of expense or limited time.

Table 1

Total Title, Subject, and Periodical Requests

in Filled, Not Received, or Not Filled Outcomes

Type of Request		Filled	Not Received	Not Filled	Total
Title	Number	476	172	36	684
	%	69.59	25.15	5.26	100.00
Subject	Number	179	5	6	190
	%	94.21	2.63	3.16	100.00

(Continued)

Table 1 (Continued)

Type of Request		Filled	Not Received	Not Filled	Total
Periodical	Number	28	6	2	36
	%	77.78	16.67	5.56	100.01
Total	Number	683	183	44	910
	%	75.05	20.11	4.84	100.00

Subject requests: fill rate. (See Table 1) The high 94.21% fill rate for subject requests indicated that efforts were made to fill all requests in this category quickly with relevant information of some kind. The few requests in this category which were not received were generally for materials on a subject for which all items at referral libraries were in use and for which items had been reserved for the requesting library. The 3.16% rate for subject requests not filled was explained by reference questions for which answers could not be found.

Periodical requests: fill rate. (See Table 1) Most periodical requests, 77.78%, were filled. The 16.67% not received were for articles which were still being searched. For three requests in this category, however, notification from a location that was going to fill was received, yet receipt of photocopy was inexplicably delayed 33 days, with no evidence of receipt by the close of the study. The 5.56% of periodical requests that were not filled were for a unique item that could not be located and for hard copy which could not be loaned, rather than photocopy.

Region totals. The number of requests in each outcome category for each of the individual regions is shown in Appendix II, Table A. Appendix II, Table B breaks down the requests which originated at each of the regions into the request types.

Analysis of filled requests by referral point. The total number of filled requests for each region is arranged by referral point that supplied the materials in Table 2. It is obvious that Region 3, with the largest base collection, was required to refer requests to other libraries less frequently. Libraries served by REBUCs with smaller collections, in contrast, more frequently sent requests to other referral points.

Table 3 shows the percentage of each request type filled at each referral point. The REBUC libraries were instrumental in filling 58.71% (401) of all requests filled. They were most successful at filling subject requests, providing the materials for 62.57% (112) of the 179 requests in that category. Title requests were filled by REBUCs at the slightly lower figure of 59.24% (282) of the total for that category. The requirement for a specific title more often necessitated the routing of a request to one or more referral points beyond the REBUC. The REBUC libraries were least successful at filling requests for periodical photocopy, supplying materials for 25.00% (7) of all requests in this category.

ISL filled 25.92% (177) of all requests. When added to all REBUC fills, the result was a total of 84.63% of all requests for which materials were received that were filled at what are generally the first two referral points. Of the 476 title fills, ISL supplied 22.90% (109). Addition of the REBUC fills in this category resulted in a total of 82.14% of all filled

Table 2

Total Requests From Each Region Filled at Each Referral Point

Region		REBUC	ISL	Other Idaho	PNBC	Other	Unable to Determine	Total Fills
(1)	Number	43	32	29	-	1	3	108
	%	39.81	29.63	26.85	-	0.93	2.78	100.00
(2)	Number	75	44	7	-	1	-	127
	%	59.06	34.65	5.51	-	0.79	-	100.01
(3)	Number	202	26	3	2	9	13	255
	%	79.22	10.20	1.18	0.78	3.53	5.10	100.01
(4)	Number	24	31	11	1	-	-	67
	%	35.82	46.27	16.42	1.49	-	-	100.00
(5)	Number	26	25	10	6	-	1	68
	%	38.24	36.77	14.71	8.82	-	1.47	100.01
(6)	Number	31	19	4	2	1	1	58
	%	53.45	32.76	6.90	3.45	1.72	1.72	100.00
State Total	Number	401	177	64	11	12	18	683
	%	58.71	25.92	9.37	1.61	1.76	2.64	100.01

Table 3

Total Title, Subject, and Periodical Requests Filled at Each Referral Point

Type of Request		All REBUCs	ISL	Other Idaho	PNBC	Other	Unable to Determine	Total Fills
Title	Number	282	109	48	9	11	17	476
	%	59.24	22.90	10.08	1.89	2.31	3.57	99.99
	Cumulated %	59.24	82.14	92.22	94.11	96.42	99.99	-
Subject	Number	112	63	2	1	-	1	179
	%	62.57	35.20	1.12	0.56	-	0.56	100.01
	Cumulated %	62.57	97.77	98.89	99.45	-	100.01	-
Periodical	Number	7	5	14	1	1	-	28
	%	25.00	17.86	50.00	3.57	3.57	-	100.00
	Cumulated %	25.00	42.86	92.86	96.43	100.00	-	-
Total	Number	401	177	64	11	12	18	683
	%	58.71	25.92	9.37	1.61	1.76	2.64	100.01
	Cumulated %	58.71	84.63	94.00	95.61	97.37	100.01	-

title requests being provided by these two referral points. ISL filled subject requests for 35.20% of the 179 requests total. When added to the REBUC figure for this category, a total of 97.77% of all fills was arrived at for the first two referral points. The periodical fills at ISL were 17.86% (5) of the 28 requests total. Adding this figure to that of all REBUCs resulted in a total of 42.86% of all requests in this category that were filled at the first two referral points.

Other Idaho libraries supplied 9.37% (64) of all filled requests. Addition of this figure to those of all REBUCs and ISL resulted in a total of 94.00% of all requests for which materials were provided being filled within the borders of the state. Other Idaho libraries filled 10.08% (48) of the 476 title requests. When added to the title fill figures for REBUC and ISL a total of 92.22% was arrived at for fills within the state in this category. Of the 179 subject requests filled, Other Idaho libraries provided 1.12% (2). Adding this figure to those of REBUC and ISL resulted in a total of 98.89% of all subject requests for which materials were received being filled within the state. Periodical requests filled by Other Idaho libraries totalled 50.00% (14) of the 28 periodical fills. Addition of this figure to those for REBUCs and ISL showed that 92.86% of all periodical requests for which materials were received were filled in Idaho. The 50.00% concentration of periodical fills in the Other Idaho category emphasizes the value of the most recent update of the Idaho Union List of Serials as a tool which would save the patron time when used at the REBUC level to bypass ISL and send requests directly to the library holding the desired periodical title.

The title requests from each region which were filled at the various referral points are shown in Appendix II, Table C. Subject requests from each region which were filled at the various referral points are broken down in Appendix II, Table D. Periodical requests from each region are similarly presented in Appendix II, Table E.

Turnaround Time: All Requests

Turnaround time in days was calculated for the 683 requests for which requested materials of some type were received at the originating library. The day materials were requested was counted as the first turnaround day. The day they were received, however, was not counted as a turnaround day. The range of turnaround days was distributed from one to 39. A request taken on the first day of the study for which materials were received on the 40th day was considered to have taken 39 days to fill. All weekends and holidays within the study period are included in the figures for turnaround time.

Of the entire total of 910 requests for the state in all outcome categories, the following percentages were filled within 10 and 15 days:

Total Requests Submitted	% Filled: 10 Days	% Filled: 15 Days
910	41.98% (382)	58.46% (532)

Of the 683 requests that were filled, the percentages which were filled within 10 and 15 days were as follows:

Total Fills	% Filled: 10 Days	% Filled: 15 Days
683	55.93% (382)	77.89% (532)

The turnaround time mean, range, mode, and median for the 683 requests filled were the following:

Total Fills	Mean Turnaround Time (Days)	Range (Days)	Mode (Days)	Median (Days)
683	11.39	1-39	7	9

The mean turnaround time here can be compared with Nelson Associates 22.14 days (4, p. 56) and Taylor's 19.75 days (8, p. 66). The unique structural and procedural differences between the systems studied in those instances and the Idaho system require that caution be exercised when drawing conclusions, however. The 11.39 day mean in the present investigation possibly would have been higher had the study extended for a longer time period, since it is calculated only on those requests which were filled within 39 days. Had the materials return period been longer, many of the requests in the not received category might have been filled and would have raised the figure for mean turnaround time considerably.

The percentages of all requests submitted from each region which were filled within 10 and 15 days were as follows:

Region	Total Requests Submitted	% Filled: 10 Days	% Filled: 15 Days
1	156	23.08% (36)	43.59% (68)
2	164	51.22% (84)	64.63% (106)
3	352	46.59% (164)	60.51% (213)
4	89	37.08% (33)	58.43% (52)
5	72	44.44% (32)	70.83% (51)
6	77	42.86% (33)	54.55% (42)

The percentages of the filled requests from each of the regions for which materials were received within 10 and 15 days were the following:

Region	Total Fills: All Referral Points	% Filled: 10 Days	% Filled: 15 Days
1	108	33.33% (36)	62.96% (68)
2	127	66.14% (84)	83.46% (106)
3	255	64.31% (164)	83.53% (213)
4	67	49.25% (33)	77.61% (52)
5	68	47.06% (32)	75.00% (51)
6	58	56.90% (33)	72.41% (42)

The turnaround time mean, range, mode, and median for all filled requests from each of the regions were as follows:

Region	Total Fills: All Referral Points	Mean Turn. Time (Days)	Range (Days)	Mode (Days)	Median (Days)
1	108	14.35	2-38	14	14
2	127	10.27	1-35	9	7
3	255	10.33	1-39	7	7
4	67	11.73	1-29	7	11
5	68	11.59	1-23	12	11
6	58	12.33	2-39	6	8.5

It must be noted that Regions 1 and 6, with the highest mean turnaround times are also the regions that are the farthest from the state library in terms of postal service, and added time for mail delivery at these greater distances should be taken into account. The mean turnaround figures for these distant regions dropped significantly, particularly in the case of Region 6,

when turnaround times at the respective REBUC libraries only were considered. The percentages of all requests filled at each of the REBUC libraries only within 10 and 15 days were the following:

Region	Total REBUC Fills	% Filled: 10 Days	% Filled: 15 Days
1	43	58.14% (25)	74.42% (32)
2	75	70.67% (53)	80.00% (60)
3	202	69.80% (141)	88.61% (179)
4	24	83.33% (20)	91.67% (22)
5	26	88.46% (23)	96.15% (25)
6	31	80.65% (25)	80.65% (25)

The mean turnaround time for all requests filled at all REBUC libraries combined was 9.45 days. These libraries are usually the first referral point.

The mean turnaround time, range, mode, and median for all requests filled at each of the REBUC libraries are shown:

Region	Total REBUC Fills	Mean Turn. Time (Days)	Range (Days)	Mode (Days)	Median (Days)
1	43	11.98	2-38	6, 7	8
2	75	9.83	1-35	1, 5	6
3	202	9.07	1-38	7	7
4	24	8.71	1-21	8	8
5	26	7.96	1-17	6, 7, 8, 9	8
6	31	9.32	2-32	5, 6	6

The mean turnaround time for all request filled at ISL, usually the second referral point, was 12.65 days. The mean, range, mode, and median

for all requests filled at ISL as well as those figures for requests filled at other referral libraries were as follows:

Referral Point	Total Fills	Mean Turn. Time (Days)	Range (Days)	Mode (Days)	Median (Days)
ISL	177	12.65	1-37	14	12
Other Idaho	64	16.02	4-39	14	14.50
PNBC	11	16.55	7-39	10, 11	12
Other	12	24.58	13-34	25, 29	25

Requests filled at ISL and referral points other than REBUC added significant amounts of turnaround time to all requests. Those regions which, because of smaller REBUC collections, rely more heavily on referral libraries beyond the REBUC, generally had the highest mean turnaround times.

Title requests. Of the complete total of 684 title requests for the state, the following percentages were filled within 10 and 15 days:

Total Title Requests Submitted	% Filled: 10 Days	% Filled: 15 Days
684	38.45% (263)	54.09% (370)

Of the 476 title requests that were filled the percentages which were filled within 10 and 15 days were as follows:

Total Title Fills	% Filled: 10 Days	% Filled: 15 Days
476	55.25% (263)	77.73% (370)

The turnaround time, mean, range, mode, and median for all title requests filled were the following:

Total Title Fills	Mean Turn. Time (Days)	Range (Days)	Mode (Days)	Median (Days)
476	11.72	1-39	7	9

The percentages of all title requests filled at each of the REBUC libraries only within 10 and 15 days were the following:

Region	Total REBUC Title Fills	% Filled: 10 Days	% Filled: 15 Days
1	33	57.58% (19)	69.70% (23)
2	62	70.97% (44)	79.03% (49)
3	142	63.38% (90)	86.62% (123)
4	15	66.67% (10)	80.00% (12)
5	15	93.33% (14)	100.00% (15)
6	15	73.33% (11)	73.33% (11)

The mean turnaround time for all title requests filled at all REBUC libraries combined was 10.12 days.

The mean turnaround time, range, mode, and median for all title requests filled at each of the REBUC libraries were as follows:

Region	Total REBUC Title Fills	Mean Turn. Time (Days)	Range (Days)	Mode (Days)	Median (Days)
1	33	12.64	2-38	6	8
2	62	9.95	1-35	1	5.5
3	142	9.92	1-38	7	8
4	15	9.07	1-21	8	8
5	15	7.00	1-15	7	7
6	15	11.00	2-32	5, 6	6

The mean turnaround time for all title requests filled at ISL was as shown:

Total ISL Title Fills	Mean Turn. Time (Days)	Range (Days)	Mode (Days)	Median (Days)
109	12.02	1-37	12	11

Subject requests. Of the entire total of 190 subject requests submitted, the following percentages were filled within 10 and 15 days:

Total Subject Requests Submitted	% Filled: 10 Days	% Filled: 15 Days
190	59.47% (113)	76.84% (146)

Of the 179 subject requests that were filled, the percentages which were filled within 10 and 15 days were as follows:

Total Subject Fills	% Filled: 10 Days	% Filled: 15 Days
179	63.13% (113)	81.56% (146)

The mean turnaround time, range, mode, and median for all subject requests filled are shown here:

Total Subject Fills	Mean Turn. Time (Days)	Range (Days)	Mode (Days)	Median (Days)
179	9.95	1-28	6	8

The percentages of all subject requests filled at each of the REBUC libraries only within 10 and 15 days were the following:

Region	Total REBUC Subject Fills	% Filled: 10 Days	% Filled: 15 Days
1	8	75.00% (6)	87.50% (7)
2	13	69.23% (9)	84.61% (11)
3	57	85.97% (49)	92.98% (53)
4	8	100.00% (8)	100.00% (8)
5	10	80.00% (8)	90.00% (9)
6	16	87.50% (14)	87.50% (14)

The mean turnaround time for all subject requests filled at all REBUC libraries combined was 7.73 days.

The mean turnaround time, range, mode, and median for all subject requests filled at each of the REBUC libraries are presented here:

Region	Total REBUC Subject Fills	Mean Turn. Time (Days)	Range (Days)	Mode (Days)	Median (Days)
1	8	8.75	5-17	7	7
2	13	9.23	1-24	5	6
3	57	7.00	1-24	6	6
4	8	8.25	7-10	7	8
5	10	8.70	3-17	8, 10	8.5
6	16	7.75	3-20	5, 6, 8	6.5

The mean turnaround time, range, mode, and median for all subject requests filled at ISL are as follows:

Total ISL Subject Fills	Mean Turn. Time (Days)	Range (Days)	Mode (Days)	Median (Days)
63	13.32	4-28	14	14

The mean turnaround time for subject requests filled at ISL was just over one day more than the figure for title requests filled there. This phenomenon was the reverse of what was observed at the REBUC level where, in all regions except Region 5, subject requests were filled more rapidly than were title requests. Since ISL is generally the last referral point for subject requests, some requests may have had to wait for appropriate materials to return before they were filled, causing a subsequent increase in mean turnaround time.

Comparison of title and subject requests. Figures in percentages for title requests filled within 10 and 15 days were lower than those for subject requests, while the mean turnaround time for title requests was

higher than for subject requests. The requirement of a specific title to fill a request frequently appeared to require that materials in use be placed on reserve for the requesting library, increasing turnaround time for those items. It appeared, however, that some information to fill a subject request was more frequently available immediately. The percentages of subject requests filled within 10 and 15 days was somewhat higher than those for titles, with the mean turnaround time for subjects having been almost two days less.

Periodical requests. Of the complete total of 36 periodical requests submitted, the following percentages were filled within 10 and 15 days:

Total Periodical Requests Submitted	% Filled: 10 Days	% Filled: 15 Days
36	16.67% (6)	44.44% (16)

Of the 28 periodical requests that were filled, the percentages which were filled within 10 and 15 days were as follows:

Total Periodical Fills	% Filled: 10 Days	% Filled: 15 Days
28	21.43% (6)	57.14% (16)

The mean turnaround time, range, mode, and median for all periodical requests filled were as shown:

Total Periodical Fills	Mean Turn. Time (Days)	Range (Days)	Mode (Days)	Median (Days)
28	14.93	5-27	14	14

That periodical requests were frequently filled at referral points other than the REBUC or ISL was reflected in the figures for fills within 10 and 15 days and in the mean turnaround time.

Patron Satisfaction With Turnaround Time

Patron concept of what constituted a reasonable amount of time to wait for requested materials varied considerably from individual to individual. While some patrons marked the Very Satisfied response after turnaround time delays up to 38 days, one patron marked Very Dissatisfied in a case in which turnaround time was only three days.

A total of 94.71% of the entire 624 respondents were very satisfied or satisfied with turnaround times of one to 39 days. The results of this section of the survey form were as follows:

Degree of Patron Satisfaction With Turnaround Time	No. of Responses	% of Total Responses	Cumulated %	Range: Turnaround Days
Very Satisfied	382	61.22	61.22	1-38
Satisfied	209	33.49	94.71	1-39
Neutral	24	3.85	98.56	2-28
Dissatisfied	5	0.80	99.36	13-29
Very Dissatisfied	4	0.64	100.00	3-20
Total	624	100.00	-	1-39

Although a large percentage of patrons indicated that they were satisfied with the turnaround time, comments by some who indicated satisfaction also noted that faster service was desirable. Patron comments relating to turnaround time are included in Appendix III.

Patron Satisfaction With Materials Received

Patrons were generally satisfied with the materials they received. Of the total of 590 patron responses to this section of the survey sheet, 94.07% (555) indicated that they were very satisfied or satisfied with

what was sent. Some patrons declined to respond to this section of the questionnaire until they had used the materials received. The degree of patron satisfaction with materials received is displayed as follows:

Degree of Patron Satisfaction With Materials Received	No. of Responses	% of Total Response	Cumulated %
Very Satisfied	372	63.05	63.05
Satisfied	183	31.02	94.07
Neutral	20	3.39	97.46
Dissatisfied	11	1.86	99.32
Very Dissatisfied	4	0.68	100.00
Total	590	100.00	-

The degree of patron satisfaction with materials received from each REBUC can be found in Appendix II, Table F. The degree of patron satisfaction with materials received from ISL is shown in Appendix II, Table G.

The percentage of patrons who were very satisfied or satisfied was slightly higher for title requests than it was for subject requests. Of the 416 title fills for which responses were received 95.43% (397) were marked Very Satisfied or Satisfied. Of the 148 responses on subject fills, 89.19% (132) were very satisfied or satisfied with the materials received.

All 26 responses relating to satisfaction with materials for periodical requests showed that patrons were either very satisfied or satisfied with materials received in this category.

Table 4 shows the degree of patron satisfaction with materials received by request type.

Table 4

Patron Satisfaction with Materials Received in Title, Subject, or Periodical Categories

Type of Request		Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Total
Title	Number	270	127	10	7	2	416
	%	64.90	30.53	2.40	1.68	0.48	99.99
	Cumulated %	64.90	95.43	97.83	99.51	99.99	-
Subject	Number	86	46	10	4	2	148
	%	58.11	31.08	6.76	2.70	1.35	100.00
	Cumulated %	58.11	89.19	95.95	98.65	100.00	-
Periodical	Number	16	10	-	-	-	26
	%	61.54	38.46	-	-	-	100.00
	Cumulated %	61.54	100.00	-	-	-	-

It was obvious that a patron who received the title he requested would probably be satisfied. Responses that indicated the patron was less than satisfied here were usually encountered when substitutions were made for the requested title. Reliance on the subjective material selection decisions of an individual who had little or no direct contact with the patron was a possible reason for the slight drop in the percentages of patrons who were very satisfied or satisfied with materials filling subject requests. Responses that indicated that the patron was less than satisfied for subject requests were most often encountered when materials received did not match the needs of the patron.

Patron comments relating to materials received are included in Appendix III. Also contained in Appendix III are general patron comments concerning library and Interlibrary Loan (ILL) service.

Patron Pick Up of Materials Received

Of the 683 filled requests, 95.90% (655) were called for by the patron. A total of 4.10% (28) items were not picked up by the end of the study period.

Of the 655 requests that were called for, 588 showed a pick up date. Patrons were usually very prompt in calling for materials, with 37.25% (219) coming in the day the materials arrived. Patrons who picked up materials the day they arrived were counted as having taken zero days to call for them. At the end of seven full days, 93.09% (547) of all materials showing a pick up date had been claimed by the patron. The mean, range, mode, and median in days for patron pick up of materials claimed were as follows:

Mean Delay Patron Pick Up (Days)	Range (Days)	Mode (Days)	Median (Days)
2.36	0-22	0	1

Characteristics of Requests

Title requests. The 684 title requests submitted were categorized as Fiction, Non-fiction, Other (records, films, and cassettes), and Unable to Determine. Sources of verification for these categories were the main card catalog at Denver Public Library, the main card catalog at Penrose Library at the University of Denver, and the National Union Catalog. The unable-to-determine category included the 75 survey forms which did not have a copy of the ILL form attached and the 24 requests for which no verification information was found. The categories into which the requests fell and their distribution by outcome are displayed in Table 5.

Of the total of 356 non-fiction title requests submitted, verification of class for 337 was found in the previously mentioned sources. These 337 were arranged according to their occurrence in the ten classes of the Dewey first summary. As is the practice in many libraries, biographies were removed from 920-929 and classed separately. The distribution of requests is shown in Table 6.

The Nelson Associates study in New York did not class non-fiction requests according to Dewey. Instead, a similar system of 12 classes was devised (4, p. 38) in which the materials most heavily requested were in the social sciences, history, and science, mathematics, in that order. Palmour and Gray's study of resource libraries in Illinois (5, p. 19) found

Table 5

Distribution of Title Requests by Category and Outcome

Category of Request		Filled	Not Received	Not Filled	Total
Fiction	Number	117	33	7	157
	%	74.52	21.02	4.46	100.00
Nonfiction	Number	239	102	15	356
	%	67.14	28.65	4.21	100.00
Other	Number	21	2	-	23
	%	91.30	8.70	-	100.00
Unable to Determine	Number	99	35	14	148
	%	66.89	23.65	9.46	100.00
Total	Number	476	172	36	684
	%	69.59	25.15	5.26	100.00

Table 6

Dewey Classes:

Non-fiction Title Requests Submitted

Dewey Class	No. of Requests	% of Total
000-099	6	1.78
100-199	25	7.42
200-299	19	5.64
300-399	54	16.02
400-499	5	1.48
500-599	31	9.20
600-699	64	18.99
700-799	51	15.13
800-899	14	4.15
900-999	48	14.24
Biography	20	5.94
Total	337	99.99

that the social sciences and technology ranked first and second, respectively in request demand. The section of Currier's 1969 analysis of Pacific Northwest west Bibliographic Center, (PNBC) (1, p. 160) which discussed requests processed at Washington State Library used the 100 Dewey divisions to classify the 5,331 title requests analyzed there. This section has been reduced here to the 10 Dewey classes for comparison with the present investigation.

Currier: 1969

Dewey Class	No. of Requests	% of Total
000-099	66	1.19
100-199	823	14.88
200-299	151	2.73
300-399	1294	23.40
400-499	37	0.67
500-599	265	4.79
600-699	1345	24.32
700-799	499	9.02
800-899	234	4.23
900-999	532	9.62
Biography	190	3.44
Fiction	95	1.72
Total	5531	100.01

Title requests: filled. Non-fiction title requests that were filled closely matched the percentages of requests submitted in each of the Dewey classes, indicating that the collections of the state were sufficiently well-balanced to fill the needs of the average requestor.

Title requests: publication dates. Publication dates were found for 495 of the 684 title requests submitted and are seen in Table 7. Dates were verified in the main card catalog at Denver Public Library, the main card catalog at Penrose Library at the University of Denver, the National Union Catalog, the Cumulative Book Index, and Books in Print.

Several previous studies analyzed requests by item publication date. Their results are reproduced here and can be compared with the data presented in the current inquiry.

Currier's 1969 investigation at PNBC (1, p. 60) divided the publication dates of 663 items requested there, both fiction and non-fiction, as follows:

Dates	No. of Requests	% of Total	Cumulated %
1968-1969	28	4.22	4.22
1962-1967	208	31.37	35.59
1956-1961	103	15.54	51.13
1900-1956	259	39.06	90.19
Before 1900	51	7.69	97.88
Unable to Determine	14	2.11	99.99

The section of Currier's study that analyzed requests received at Washington State Library found that publication dates of 5,539 requests there (1, p. 158) were distributed in the following periods:

Dates	No. of Requests	% of Total	Cumulated %
1968-1969	802	14.48	14.48
1962-1967	1687	30.45	44.93
1956-1961	677	12.22	57.15
1900-1955	619	11.18	68.33

(Con't)

Table 7

Publication Dates: Title Requests Submitted

Publication Date	Fiction			Nonfiction			Unable to Class			Total Requests Submitted		
	#	%	Cum. %	#	%	Cum. %	#	%	Cum. %	#	%	Cum. %
1975 - 1978	47	31.97	31.97	136	41.34	41.34	14	73.68	73.68	197	39.80	39.80
1970 - 1974	39	26.53	58.50	75	22.80	64.14	5	26.32	100.00	119	24.04	63.84
1965 - 1969	12	8.16	66.66	38	11.55	75.69	-	-	-	50	10.10	73.94
1960 - 1964	7	4.76	71.42	26	7.90	83.59	-	-	-	33	6.67	80.61
1955 - 1959	10	6.80	78.22	16	4.86	88.45	-	-	-	26	5.25	85.86
1950 - 1954	8	5.44	83.66	12	3.65	92.10	-	-	-	20	4.04	89.90
1940 - 1949	7	4.76	88.42	10	3.04	95.14	-	-	-	17	3.43	93.33
1930 - 1939	8	5.44	93.86	4	1.22	96.36	-	-	-	12	2.42	95.75
1920 - 1929	5	3.40	97.26	4	1.22	97.58	-	-	-	9	1.82	97.57
1910 - 1919	2	1.36	98.62	6	1.82	99.40	-	-	-	8	1.62	99.19
1900 - 1909	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Before 1900	2	1.36	99.98	2	0.61	100.01	-	-	-	4	0.81	100.00
TOTAL	147	99.98	-	329	100.01		19	100.00	-	495	100.00	-

(Con't)

Dates	No. of Requests	% of Total	Cumulated %
1800-1899	27	0.49	68.82
Before 1800	10	0.18	69.00
Unable to Determine	1717	31.00	100.00

Palmour and Gray's 1971 analysis of 1,844 requests received by resource libraries in Illinois (5, p. 120) resulted in a breakdown by date as follows:

Dates	No. of Requests	% of Total	Cumulated %
1969-1971	528	28.63	28.63
1961-1968	558	30.26	58.89
1900-1960	501	27.17	86.06
Before 1900	31	1.68	87.74
Unknown	1717	12.26	100.00

The 1975 survey of Tennessee interlibrary loan by Stevens and Smith (8, p. 178) resulted in the following dates for materials requested by public libraries there:

Dates	% of Total	Cumulated %
1972-1974	28.70	28.70
1965-1971	31.40	60.10
1900-1964	28.00	88.10
Before 1900	2.50	90.60
Unable to Determine	9.40	100.00

Subject requests. Of 190 subject requests submitted, 35 did not have a copy of the ILL form attached. Of the 135 requests with an attached ILL form, sufficient information was available on 134 to allow them to be classified

by using the ninth abridged edition of Dewey Decimal Classification. Requests were arranged according to their occurrence in the ten classes of the Dewey First Summary. Biographies were removed from 920-929 and classed separately. The distribution of subjects requests was as follows:

Class #	No. of Requests	% of Total
000-099	1	0.75
100-199	6	4.48
200-299	2	1.49
300-399	15	11.19
400-499	11	8.21
500-599	6	4.48
600-699	31	23.13
700-799	34	25.37
800-899	9	6.72
900-999	13	9.70
Biography	6	4.48
Total	134	100.00

Subject requests: filled. The subject requests that were filled closely matched the percentages of subject requests submitted in each of the Dewey classes. The indications were that the collections of the state were sufficiently well-balanced to fill the requirements of most subject requests.

Currier's 1969 study analyzed 741 subject requests processed at Washington State Library (1, p.160). Her findings, which can be compared with those of the present study, revealed that subject requests were distributed as follows:

Currier: 1969

Class #	No. of Requests	% of Total
000-099	5	0.68
100-199	24	3.24
200-299	15	2.02
300-399	128	17.27
400-499	18	2.43
500-599	76	10.26
600-699	244	32.93
700-799	119	16.06
800-899	33	4.45
900-999 (Omit 920-929)	52	7.02
Biography	27	3.64
Total	741	100.00

Characteristics of Requests Not Received

Title requests: not received. Title requests in the not-received outcome were separated into the status categories shown in Table 8.

The Continuing Search category was for requests for which notice had been received from a REBUC or from ISL that the search was being extended to other referral points. The In Use: Reserved category was for items which were owned but were currently in circulation at the referral point and for which a reserve had been placed in the name of the requesting library. The On Order: Reserved category included items which were not owned, but which had been ordered and for which a reserve had been placed in the name of

the requesting library. The Unable to Determine category was for requests lacking a copy of the ILL form or which had an ILL form attached that bore no status report.

Table 8

Status of Title Requests

Submitted But Not Received

Status of Request	No. of Requests	% of Total
Continuing Search	15	8.72
In Use: Reserved	33	19.19
On Order: Reserved	41	23.84
Unable to Determine	83	48.26
Total	172	100.01

Requests which bore status reports were separated into one of the first three status categories. All others were placed in the unable-to-determine category. Many of the requests in the unable-to-determine category asked for materials bearing recent publication dates and appeared to be for the same type of recent material that made up the bulk of the first three status categories. Had status reports been attached, it is possible that some of the unable-to-determine requests would have been distributed in one of the first three status categories.

Of the 172 title requests in the not-received outcome (see Table 5), 33 were for items of fiction, 102 were for non-fiction, two were for other (records, films, cassettes), and 35, because of their lack of ILL forms, were categorized as unable-to-determine.

Of the 102 non-fiction title requests not received, sufficient information was available to class 92 using the previously mentioned sources of verification. The percentages of requests in each of the 10 Dewey classes so closely matched the percentages for all requests submitted (see Table 6) that a table is not included.

Publication dates were found for 135 of the 172 requests in the not-received outcome and are displayed in Table 9. A high percentage of title requests in the not-received outcome were for materials with 1970-1978 dates of publication. As previously noted, many of the more recent items were in use and had been reserved for the patron or were being ordered at a referral point and were placed on reserve, to be sent to the requesting library upon receipt.

Subject requests: not received. The five subject requests in the not-received outcome were separated into the same status categories as title requests not received. One, in the continuing-search status category, was for specialized items on nursing. This request was being referred to a special library. One request was in the in-use/reserved category and was for biographical materials that were currently circulating. One request, in the on-order/reserved category, asked for specialized information on livestock breeding. Materials had been ordered to fill this request. Two requests in the not-received outcome, both submitted on the third day of the study period, had not been filled when the study closed, 38 days later. They were for different patrons of the same library and asked for "how-to" information on the relatively common subjects of tap-dancing and guitar playing. No status report indicating reserve or extension of search was attached to either request.

Table 9

Publication Dates: Title Requests Submitted But Not Received

Publication Date	Fiction			Nonfiction			Unable to Class			Total		
	#	%	Cum. %	#	%	Cum. %	#	%	Cum. %	#	%	Cum. %
1975 - 1978	15	48.39	48.39	53	56.38	56.38	8	80.00	80.00	76	56.30	56.30
1970 - 1974	8	25.81	74.20	17	18.09	74.47	2	20.00	100.00	27	20.00	76.30
1965 - 1969	2	6.45	80.65	11	11.70	86.17	-	-	-	13	9.63	85.93
1960 - 1964	-	-	-	6	6.38	92.55	-	-	-	6	4.44	90.37
1955 - 1959	2	6.45	87.10	3	3.19	95.74	-	-	-	5	3.70	94.07
1950 - 1954	1	3.23	90.33	2	2.13	97.87	-	-	-	3	2.22	96.29
1940 - 1949	1	3.23	93.56	1	1.06	98.93	-	-	-	2	1.48	97.77
1930 - 1939	1	3.23	96.79	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.74	98.51
1920 - 1929	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
1910 - 1919	1	3.23	100.02	1	1.06	99.99	-	-	-	2	1.48	99.99
1900 - 1909	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Before 1900	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL	31	100.02	-	94	99.99	-	10	100.00	-	135	99.99	-

Periodical requests: not received. Of the six periodical photocopy requests in the not-received outcome, five had ILL forms and status reports attached. Of these five, one was for an item for which the search was continuing. The remaining four were for items held at a university library. A status report for these four requests, indicating intent to fill, had been received by the requesting library. Photocopy, however, had not been received at the close of the study. Time elapsed between submission of these four requests and the close of the study period ranged from 29 to 33 days.

Characteristics of Requests Not Filled

The factors in the failure to fill requests in this investigation were similar to those in other studies. Currier (1, p. 67) indicated that the primary reasons for non-fills were that requested materials had not yet been purchased and that items requested did not circulate. Richard Ellis (2, p. 31) noted that reasons for failure to fill were that items were not owned, items could not be verified, and items did not circulate. Palmour and Gray also found that non-ownership and requests of non-circulating items were reasons for failure to fill (5, p. 23). Stevens and Smith (7, p. 179) noted that the largest percentage of unfilled requests resulted from non-ownership of the requested item.

Title requests: not filled. Title requests in the not-filled outcome were separated as shown in Table 10. The Non-circulating category was for reference items that referral points would not loan. The Not Verifiable category included items for which verification was not located. The Not Available category was for items which were not found in Idaho collections or elsewhere. Also included were items which the patron was unwilling to have

searched elsewhere for reasons of expense or limited time. Items which may have been in print but which ISL and REBUC libraries declined to purchase were included here, as well. Some of these requests were sent back to the originating library with a suggestion that they purchase it themselves. The Unable to Determine category included requests which lacked a copy of the ILL form or which had an ILL form attached that bore no status report.

Table 10

Factors in Failure to Fill:

Title Requests Submitted But Not Filled

Factor	No. of Requests	% of Total
Non-circulating	1	2.78
Not Verifiable	5	13.89
Not Available	13	36.11
Unable to Determine	17	47.22
Total	36	100.00

Of the 36 title requests not filled, 15 were for non-fiction, seven were for fiction, and 14 were not classifiable or had no ILL form attached. The 15 non-fiction items were so few that no tabular class breakdown is included. Classes with more than one unfilled request were 100-199, 200-299, 600-699, and 700-799. No class had more than three unfilled requests.

Publication dates were found for 19 of the fiction and non-fiction title requests not filled. Sixty-three percent (12) of these requests were grouped in the time period 1970-1978. Again, the items here were so few that no tabular breakdown by publication date is included.

Subject requests: not filled. Of the six subject requests not filled, three were for reference questions for which no answer could be found, one was for information that could be provided only if the patron came to the REBUC and used a reference tool to research the question himself, and two had no ILL form attached.

Periodical requests: not filled. Of the two periodical requests not filled, one asked for an article from a periodical that could not be identified and located, and the other asked that hard copy rather than photocopy be sent.

DISCUSSION

The present inquiry found that 75.05% of Idaho interlibrary loan requests submitted during the study period were filled within 39 days of submission. This fill rate compared favorably with the findings of other investigations nationwide. Title requests and periodical requests, due to their requirement for a specific title, were filled at a lower rate than were subject requests.

Materials for a total of 94.00% of all filled requests were supplied from referral points within the borders of the state. A total of 58.46% of all requests submitted had been filled within 15 days of submission.

The mean turnaround time for all requests was 11.39 days and compared favorably with turnaround time nationwide, although this figure did not consider the 20.11% of submitted requests that had not been accounted for when the study ended. Subject requests were filled the most rapidly, with title requests and periodical requests taking successively longer periods to fill.

While they may have preferred that their requests be filled more rapidly, patrons were not dissatisfied with the length of time they waited for the materials they had requested, even when those items took as long as 39 days to arrive. The majority of patrons were also satisfied with the materials that were sent to them, even in the area of subject requests, where the choices of materials to fill the requests were often made at a referral point by an individual who had little or no direct contact with the patron.

Almost 96% of materials filling requests were called for by the patrons who requested them, and almost all patrons who had picked up their requested items had done so within a week of the item's arrival at the library from which the request originated.

The characteristics of materials requested closely reflected those of materials requested in other studies, in the case of both class and publication time period. Reasons for failure to fill requests, as well, paralleled those observed in other, similar investigations.

Comments generally indicated that most patrons felt the interlibrary loan service was very good.

Examination of the data made apparent the fact that the days allotted for materials return were not sufficient to allow the final outcome of all requests to be determined. Although nearly 80% of the requests were accounted for, the remaining 20% may have affected some of the results, particularly the figures for fill rate and mean turnaround time. The time period for any subsequent study should be lengthened in order to determine the final outcome of a larger percentage of requests.

Instructions for completing the data collection instrument were apparently not totally clear, with the result that some libraries failed to include the file copy of the interlibrary loan request form. Some libraries began to collect data too soon and some continued to collect data after the study had closed. A future investigation should attempt to clarify and simplify the necessary instructions.

REFERENCES

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3. NYSILL Evaluation: Phase 3. Albany, New York: State Education Department, 1965.

4. Nelson Associates, Inc. An Evaluation of the New York State Library's NYSILL Pilot Program. New York: Nelson Associates, Inc., 1968.

5. Palmour, Vernon E. and Gray, Lucy E., Costs and Effectiveness of Interlibrary Loan and Reference Activities of Resource Libraries in Illinois. Springfield, Illinois: Illinois State Library, 1972.

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8. Taylor, David W. et al. An Operations Research Study of the Pacific Northwest Bibliographic Center. Olympia, Washington: Washington State Library, 1972.

9. Thompson, Sarah K., Interlibrary Loan Involving Academic Libraries. Chicago: American Library Association, 1970.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

EXHIBIT A

ILL SURVEY WORKSHEET

I.

1. LIBRARY_____ 2. REGION_____

3. DATE REQUEST SUBMITTED_____

4. TYPE OF ILL REQUEST FORM USED: TITLE_____
SUBJECT_____
PERIODICAL_____

II.

5. DATE MATERIAL RECEIVED FROM LENDING LIBRARY _____

6. LIBRARY FROM WHICH MATERIAL WAS RECEIVED:

YOUR REBUC_____ OTHER IDAHO_____
ISL_____ PNBC_____
OTHER_____

7. THIS REQUEST WAS NOT FILLED_____

8. MATERIAL NOT YET RECEIVED_____

III.

9. PATRON PICK-UP DATE_____

10. FOR PATRON RESPONSE: (PLEASE CIRCLE YOUR CHOICE)

A. PLEASE INDICATE YOUR DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH THE LENGTH OF TIME YOU WAITED FOR THESE MATERIALS:

1. VERY SATISFIED
2. SATISFIED
3. NEUTRAL
4. DISSATISFIED
5. VERY DISSATISFIED

B. PLEASE INDICATE YOUR DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH THE MATERIALS YOU RECEIVED:

1. VERY SATISFIED
2. SATISFIED
3. NEUTRAL
4. DISSATISFIED
5. VERY DISSATISFIED

C. COMMENTS:

APPENDIX I

EXHIBIT B

IDAHO STATE LIBRARY

HELEN M. MILLER, State Librarian

325 W. STATE STREET
Area Code 208

BOISE, IDAHO 83702
384-2150

December 12, 1977

Dear Librarian:

This letter is to introduce to you a forthcoming study on interlibrary loan in Idaho libraries. The study will focus on the amount of time it takes for your patrons to obtain materials, will attempt to assess patron reaction to delays, and patron satisfaction with the materials received.

The study will be conducted by Michael Herman, who has worked at the Boise Public Library for the past year, and who is now a student at the University of Denver Graduate School of Librarianship.

Mike plans to provide enough survey worksheets so that you can use one for each interlibrary loan request which you submit to another library during the two week period of January 16 through January 27. A sample form is enclosed. Complete instructions and a packet of forms will be sent to you in early January.

We are especially pleased that Mike has chosen this area for research. The study will provide us all with data regarding the efficiency and the patron satisfaction related to interlibrary loan in Idaho.

If you have questions or suggestions, please contact me or Kathy Folger here at the State Library (384-2150), or Michael Herman, 3750 E. Jewell Ave. #323-B, Denver, Colorado 80210.

Your cooperation and assistance are of course vital to the success of the project, and we thank you in advance.

Sincerely yours,

Helen M. Miller

Helen M. Miller, State Librarian

APPENDIX I

EXHIBIT C

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING IDAHO INTERLIBRARY LOAN SURVEY WORKSHEETS

I. A. Beginning on Monday, January 16 and continuing for a period of two weeks, through Friday, January 27, fill out a worksheet for each interlibrary loan (ILL) request you take.

B. At the time you take the request, complete the first part of the worksheet, including:
1. Your library's name
2. The region you library is in
3. The day's date
4. The type of request form you are submitting (check the appropriate blank)

C. Staple the worksheet to your (goldenrod) file copy of the request form and hold at your library until you receive a response to the request.

II. A. When you receive a response to the request, fill in the appropriate sections of part II of the worksheet, including:
5. The date the material was received from the lending library
6. The type library from which the material was received (REBUC, ISL, etc.)
***7. If the response from ISL indicates the request cannot be filled, check this section.

III. A. When the materials are picked up by the patron, fill in:
9. The date the patron picked the materials up.
Ask the patron to provide a response to:
10. a. "Please indicate your degree of satisfaction with the length of time you waited for these materials"
b. "Please indicate your degree of satisfaction with the materials you received"
c. Comments (Ask patrons to make any comments they feel are appropriate)

B. Retain the worksheet and your file copy of the request form and place them in the enclosed envelope.

IV. A. On Friday, February 24, remove from your file all worksheets and request forms for which materials or status responses have not yet been received. Complete each worksheet by checking:
***8. Material not yet received.

B. Place all worksheets with attached file copies of request forms in the enclosed envelope and mail to Idaho State Library, 325 W. State St., Boise, Idaho 83702.

*** We are particularly interested in analyzing the data on request forms for which sections #7 (This request was not filled) and #8 (Material not yet received) were checked. It is important, therefore, that we have your file copy of the request form and a copy of any status responses you have received from ISL. Please attach to the form and send any copies of any information you receive by February 24, detailing the status of any request for which an ILL Study Worksheet has been filled out. Photocopies of request forms and status responses will be acceptable in place of your file copy, but please attach them to the ILL Study Worksheet that was filled out for the request.

V. If you have questions about any of these steps or about the study, please contact Kathy Folger at the State Library (384-2150) or Michael Herman, 3750 E. Jewell Ave. #323-B, Denver, Colorado, 80210.

APPENDIX I

EXHIBIT D

3750 E. Jewell Ave.
Apt. #323-B
Denver, Colorado 80210
January 9, 1978

Dear Librarian,

Enclosed are the ILL Survey Worksheets and instructions referred to in the Idaho State Library's letter to you dated December 12, 1977.

Please begin the project on Monday, January 16th and fill out a worksheet for each ILL request you originate through Friday, January 27th. Fill out worksheets only for those requests that originate at your library.

Please read the instructions carefully. If you have questions, call Kathy Folger at ISL (384-2150) or write to me at the above address.

Thanks for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Michael Herman

Michael Herman

APPENDIX II

TABLE A

Total Requests form Each Region in

Filled, Not Received, and Not Filled Outcomes

Region		Filled	Not Received	Not Filled	Total
1	Number	108	40	8	156
	%	69.23	25.64	5.13	100.00
2	Number	127	35	2	164
	%	77.44	21.34	1.22	100.00
3	Number	255	79	18	352
	%	72.44	22.44	5.11	99.99
4	Number	67	14	8	89
	%	75.29	15.73	8.99	100.00
5	Number	68	2	2	72
	%	94.44	2.78	2.78	100.00
6	Number	58	13	6	77
	%	75.33	16.88	7.79	100.00
State Total	Number	683	183	44	910
	%	75.05	20.11	4.84	100.00

APPENDIX II

TABLE B

Total Requests from Each Region

in Title, Subject, or Periodical Categories

Region		Title	Subject	Periodical	Total
1	Number	121	22	13	156
	%	77.56	14.10	8.33	99.99
2	Number	140	24	-	164
	%	85.37	14.63	-	100.00
3	Number	277	69	6	352
	%	78.69	19.60	1.70	99.99
4	Number	46	32	11	89
	%	51.69	35.96	12.36	100.01
5	Number	49	20	3	72
	%	68.06	27.78	4.17	100.01
6	Number	51	23	3	77
	%	66.23	29.87	3.90	100.00
State Total	Number	684	190	36	910
	%	75.16	20.88	3.96	100.00

APPENDIX II

TABLE C

Total Title Requests from Each Region Filled at Each Referral Point

Region #		REBUC	ISL	Other Idaho	PNBC	Other	Unable to Determine	Total Fills
1	Number	33	18	21	-	1	3	76
	%	43.42	23.68	27.63	-	1.32	3.95	100.00
2	Number	62	34	7	-	1	-	104
	%	59.62	32.69	6.73	-	0.96	-	100.00
3	Number	142	18	2	2	9	12	185
	%	76.76	9.73	1.08	1.08	4.86	6.49	100.00
4	Number	15	10	7	1	-	-	33
	%	45.46	30.30	21.21	3.03	-	-	100.00
5	Number	15	17	8	4	-	1	45
	%	33.33	37.78	17.78	8.89	-	2.22	100.00
6	Number	15	12	3	2	-	1	33
	%	45.46	36.36	9.09	6.06	-	3.03	100.00
State Total	Number	282	109	48	9	11	17	476
	%	59.24	22.90	10.08	1.89	2.31	3.57	99.99

APPENDIX II

TABLE D

Total Subject Requests from Each Region Filled at Each Referral Point

Region #		REBUC	ISL	Other Idaho	PNBC	Other	Unable to Determine	Total Fills
1	Number	8	12	1	-	-	-	21
	%	38.10	57.14	4.76	-	-	-	100.00
2	Number	13	10	-	-	-	-	23
	%	56.52	43.48	-	-	-	-	100.00
3	Number	57	7	-	-	-	1	65
	%	87.69	10.77	-	-	-	1.54	100.00
4	Number	8	19	-	-	-	-	27
	%	29.63	70.37	-	-	-	-	100.00
5	Number	10	8	1	1	-	-	20
	%	50.00	40.00	5.00	5.00	-	-	100.00
6	Number	16	7	-	-	-	-	23
	%	69.57	30.43	-	-	-	-	100.00
State Total	Number	112	63	2	1	-	1	179
	%	62.57	35.20	1.12	0.56	-	0.56	100.01

APPENDIX II

TABLE E

Total Periodical Requests from Each Region Filled at Each Referral Point

Region #		REBUC	ISL	Other Idaho	PNBC	Other	Unable to Determine	Total Fills
1	Number	2	2	7	-	-	-	11
	%	18.18	18.18	63.64	-	-	-	100.00
2	Number	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	Number	3	1	1	-	-	-	5
	%	60.00	20.00	20.00	-	-	-	100.00
4	Number	1	2	4	-	-	-	7
	%	14.29	28.57	57.14	-	-	-	100.00
5	Number	1	-	1	1	-	-	3
	%	33.33	-	33.33	33.33	-	-	99.99
6	Number	-	-	1	-	1	-	2
	%	-	-	50.00	-	50.00	-	100.00
State Total	Number	7	5	14	1	1	-	28
	%	25.00	17.86	50.00	3.57	3.57	-	100.00

APPENDIX II

TABLE F

Patron Satisfaction with Materials Received

from Each REBUC

Region #		Degree of Patron Satisfaction					
		Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dis-satisfied	Very Dis-satisfied	Total
1	Number	27	9	-	2	-	38
	%	71.05	23.68	-	5.26	-	99.99
	Cum. %	71.05	94.73	-	99.99	-	-
2	Number	43	20	2	-	-	65
	%	66.15	30.77	3.08	-	-	100.00
	Cum. %	66.15	96.92	100.00	-	-	-
3	Number	102	66	7	7	1	183
	%	55.74	36.07	3.83	3.83	0.55	100.02
	Cum. %	55.74	91.81	95.64	99.47	100.02	-
4	Number	17	5	-	-	-	22
	%	77.27	22.73	-	-	-	100.00
	Cum. %	77.27	100.00	-	-	-	-
5	Number	14	9	-	-	-	23
	%	60.87	39.13	-	-	-	100.00
	Cum. %	60.87	100.00	-	-	-	-
6	Number	13	7	4	-	1	25
	%	52.00	28.00	16.00	-	4.00	100.00
	Cum. %	52.00	80.00	96.00	-	100.00	-

APPENDIX II

TABLE G

Patron Satisfaction with

Materials Received from ISL

Degree of Patron Satisfaction	No. of Requests	% of Total Response	Cumulated %
Very Satisfied	92	61.75	61.75
Satisfied	48	32.22	93.37
Neutral	6	4.03	98.00
Dissatisfied	1	0.67	98.67
Very Dissatisfied	2	1.34	100.01
TOTAL	149	100.01	-

APPENDIX III

PATRON COMMENTS

Patron comments from the data collection instrument follow. All comments are reproduced verbatim.

TITLE REQUESTS: COMMENTS GROUPED BY DEGREE OF SATISFACTION

Very Satisfied

Turnaround time.

- Super (12 days).
- A very good service. This book took longer than usual to come in (26 days).
- I couldn't believe they had gotten here so quickly (3 days).

Materials received.

- I have always been very satisfied with other materials ordered in the past.
- Super, I can't believe you got me the book.
- The materials was just what was needed.
- Reference also called to let me know they didn't have one book title recieved. One sent to ISL - not received yet.
- 4 books sent to us - all very useful.
- Interesting, well-written, easy to understand.
- Good Story - second time in 2 years.

Satisfied

Turnaround time.

- I'm not in a hurry so it doesn't matter too much when I get the materials but I've never "had" to wait very long (19 days).

- Wished materials could have been in sooner (21 days).
- Why 15 days (15 days).

Materials received.

- Would have liked update of book.
- I wish they would have had the ones I ordered.
- Did not receive other books ordered on subject.
- BPL should put in a request to purchase used if necessary, a copy for itself.

Neutral

Materials received.

- Not the information desired but of general interest.
- Has to hear them first (records).
- Would have preferred story on his earlier life and not quite so much about the author.
- Need more books on Ireland.

Dissatisfied

Turnaround time.

- Second request on this - first request apparently abandoned (13 days).

Materials received

- Too old
- Not title asked for

TITLE REQUESTS: GENERAL COMMENTS

- Renewal service would be great.
- Would like to have renewal service
- Haven't read it yet.

- Very glad of this service and that it's available to the patron.
- A fine service. Thank you.
- My librarian always finds the books I want.
- Thank you.
- Good service.
- Very pleased with service.
- Keep up the good work.
- I am very satisfied with the library service. Thank you.
- Extremely courteous, rapid service.
- Excellent service, as always!
- I read a lot of specialized books on child development and I'm very pleased to know that through this service I can usually get any title I want. Thank you so much.
- Excellent service.
- Excellent service - always.
- Always get good service from Twin.
- Very pleased.
- Very nice people to work with.
- Think this is great. Hope this can be kept - even if you make a charge.
- No comment other than I don't know what I'd do without the library.
- This is a dumb survey.

SUBJECT REQUESTS: COMMENTS GROUPED BY DEGREE OF SATISFACTION

Very Satisfied

Materials received.

- Very pleased with that special individual touch. The selector really went out of her way. The photo copies were really appreciated.

- One was received.
- Received 4 books - one was exactly what I wanted.

Satisfied

Materials received.

- Proved good for our debate.
- Would have liked something on Cleopatra.

Dissatisfied

Materials received.

- I wanted information on specific customs and superstitions not stories and tales.
- Not what she wanted.

SUBJECT REQUESTS: GENERAL COMMENTS

- Thank you.
- Thank you for the service.
- I find all services from the library very satisfactory. I appreciate it very much.
- This is one of the best library's I been in especially for a small town.

PERIODICAL REQUESTS: COMMENTS GROUPED BY DEGREE OF SATISFACTION

Very Satisfied

Turnaround time.

- Very quick service (21 days).

Materials received.

- Very satisfied for hard to find items.
- Appreciated your calling to check if material was total article or only the pages requested.

PERIODICAL REQUESTS: GENERAL COMMENTS

- Thank you.
- Nice service to offer.